



Montana FFA Association
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Enrollment numbers –

- **2012-13 we had 2596 members**
- **2015-16 we have 4835 members**
- **This represents an 88% increase**

Student Leadership Opportunities

- New chapters have been developed in Townsend, Corvallis, CJI, St. Regis, Victor, Electric City, Gardiner, Froid, Sunburst, and Twin Bridges. These new chapters have 601 members enrolled and are now exposed to new leadership opportunities.
- Gold Conference was developed to expose older members to advanced leadership development skills. Typically, participants plan to “run” for state office.
- Montana Leadership Conferences held during John Deere Ag Expo reach over 250 members per year.
- District Leadership Conference - all 90 Chapters bring over 850 members who receive leadership training for beginning members as well as chapter officers.
- State Convention leadership workshops attract 325 members.
- Hosting a National Officer allowed us to hold workshops in Big Timber, Joliet, Lewistown, Cascade and Deer Lodge. Approximately 550 members participated in these seminars held during national FFA week in February.

The eight district leadership conferences that are held throughout the state in the fall is the student leadership opportunity that I would view as the **most important**. Not only are leadership workshops held for members, there are targeted sessions in each workshop designed for officer development. Officer development is critical, especially right at the year’s beginning. This year, we had professors from the Agriculture Education program at MSU conduct a recruiting activity to encourage senior members to consider a career in teaching.

Professional Development for Chapter Advisors – number of increased activities highlighting the best example

- District Leadership Conferences - all 97 advisors from the 90 Ag programs have the opportunity to participate in a workshop conducted by the State FFA Advisor. Topics include advisor/chapter data, application and scholarship

deadlines, how to achieve a chapter in good standing rating, and dues and roster deadlines.

- Career and Technical Education Fall Conference - New Teacher workshop very successful - since 50% of all Ag Ed teachers have less than 5 years teaching experience, this workshop is critical to help keep them in the profession.
- Montana Association of Agriculture Educators (MAAE) mentoring program - although weak now, this program is on the move to also help retain teachers. This program is being pushed forward by the MAAE officers.
- Advisor workshops at State FFA Convention. These workshops embrace different concepts each year. The past two years, workshops have included speech development, national FFA updates, developing the entrepreneurial attitude by Greg Gianforte, teacher mentoring and application development.
- Summer Update Conference. This conference is held at a new location each summer which enables teachers to experience new agricultural areas of the state. A workshop for beginning teachers has been recently developed and will occur each summer. This past summer, examples of educational workshops that took place included: developing FFA award applications and AET, understanding farm and ranch safety and the law, working with metnet, learning new soil concepts and sustainable foods, exposure to active lessons on small gasoline engines, using cannulated animals for research, developing small scale horticultural projects, learning food science principles, developing skills on Ag Career Network and touring the areas agricultural points of interest.

Perhaps the **most important** activity developed for teachers is the meeting held during District Leadership Conferences. This activity insures that each of the state's agriculture teachers receive up-to-date information from the Montana FFA Association as well as from the National FFA Organization.

Workforce Skill Development – number of increased activities highlighting the best example.

- New Career Development Events (CDE's) have occurred in Veterinary Science, Food Science, and Forestry. Due to this inclusion, students have been provide more skill development in these areas that were not available previously. Skills in public speaking, livestock evaluation, agronomy, mechanics, job interview, Agriculture issues, marketing, Agriculture communications, farm business management, horse evaluation, floriculture, and parliamentary procedure are all developed by FFA members through the CDE's held throughout the year. All of the CDE's have a national component and therefore, Montana students are exposed to skill development at the national level as well.

Statement from the National FFA Organization

Career development events focus on student success. Career opportunities abound within today's agribusiness and agriscience industries. The key to achievement lies in the ability to think critically, communicate clearly and perform effectively in a competitive world. These skills and many other are enhanced through participation in CDE's. Students can explore several areas from among the estimated 300 agriculture-related career opportunities.

The career development events held during the year, provide FFA members with the skills needed to be successful in chosen careers. CDE's are the **most important** component in workforce development.